

## **APPENDIX 8**

### **ULS FACILITIES SURVEYS (2005-2007)**

In April 2005, the University Library System performed a survey on study facilities. In view of the survey results indicating the need for collaborative learning and a range of different areas to suit individual and group needs, a Discussion Zone which can accommodate up to 40 users was set up in the University Library. At the same time, needs for quiet private study areas were met. Quiet Floors and Mobile Phone Areas were established in all Libraries and dividers had been added to large reading tables at the University Library.

The Chung Chi College Elisabeth Luce Moore Library (CCL) and the New Asia College Ch'ien Mu Library (NAL) underwent major renovations, financed by UGC AA+I funding, in the summer months of 2005 and 2003 respectively. In April 2007, facility surveys were also performed at the two Libraries.

At CCL, survey respondents including alumni, liked the design and layout of the Library more after the renovation. They considered the Library more modern after the renovation and felt that the renovated Library provides a more comfortable, open and inviting, friendly, and efficient environment, complemented by better natural and artificial light and comfortable temperature. They perceived a more spacious front counter area, a better location of the Late Reading Room, and greater convenience for group study after the renovation. On Library usage, there was a 14% increase in average number of visits and the duration of visit after the renovation (Appendix 2 for the report).

At NAL, more than 76% of respondents regarded the new facilities as useful, very useful or essential. Among the new facilities, more than 91% of respondents remarked that the Information Commons, laptop computers and multi-function PC with application software installed were useful, very useful or essential. At the same time, at the open-end question section, 40% of the written comments asked for an improvement in the existing PC and printer facilities. Out of all responses, the most favourable areas at NAL were Information Commons and single study desk, followed by Outdoor Reading Area (Appendix 3 for the report).

## Survey of Library study facilities

A survey of undergraduate students was conducted in April 2005 to assist the library in planning the provision of facilities, particularly for study purposes. The sample was structured by selecting a limited number of representative majors from each faculty. The majors selected were chosen so as to be representative of the number of majors and the number of undergraduate students in the faculty. The sample size was 1903. A questionnaire was administered via email and the web. The overall return rate was 842 or 44.3%, which would normally be considered quite respectable for a survey of this type. It is not obvious how non-responses could bias findings.

Responses to the first two quantitative questions are tabulated below:

### Frequency of study activity needed to be performed in the Library

Study activities	Very Frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean
Working alone on assignments/projects	116	298	269	133	26	3.41
Revising notes alone	178	321	218	104	21	3.63
Discussing material from lectures or readings with other students	42	194	311	231	64	2.90
Working with other students on assignments/projects	100	258	279	154	51	3.24
Searching for materials for assignments/projects	230	334	207	58	13	3.84

### Degree of necessity of study facilities in the library

Facility	Essential	Very Necessary	Useful	Of Some Use	Not Needed	Mean
Single reading desk	439	222	144	29	8	4.25
Reading table	293	271	223	43	11	3.94
Enclosed room for group discussion with ClassNet	292	233	225	73	19	3.84
Enclosed room for group discussion with Library PC	291	243	201	85	22	3.83
Discussion zone	272	257	219	73	21	3.81

Sofa	125	190	302	184	41	3.21
Late reading room	268	232	217	102	23	3.74
Drinking water fountain	280	273	182	90	17	3.84
Vending machines	138	187	232	188	96	3.10
Dedicated PC for access to library databases and Internet	338	298	165	33	8	4.10
Multi-function PC installed with application software	445	255	105	31	4	4.32
Photocopiers	515	227	78	14	6	4.47
Microform reader	116	210	302	159	55	3.21

**Size of group discussion venue**

A question asked about the most common size of study group. The most common sizes were in the order 4, 5, 6 then 3. Larger groups were rare.

**Qualitative comments**

The questionnaire contained three open-ended questions. These were analysed by searching for the most common themes and noting the number of comments within each of the major themes categories. The two tables below show the most common types of comment in response to two of the questions.

**How existing library facilities could be improved**

	<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1	Updated software installed in computers	56
2	More computers	51
3	More discussion room	35
4	Insufficient single reading desks	29
5	More photocopying machines needed	27
6	Comments on book collection	27
7	Extension to opening hours	25
8	Comments on lighting	21
9	Need for refreshments	18
10	Comments on air conditioning	13

11	Noise problem	12
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**Additional facilities wanted**

	<b>Additional facility</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1	Discussion room with computer	75
2	More computers	48
3	Refreshment & Resting place	36
4	Single reading desk	35
5	Computers installed with common software	33
6	Drinking fountain (Cold/Hot)	26
7	Photocopiers by octopus card	18
8	Scanner	16
9	Late reading room	15
10	Collection of e-journal/books/magazines/newspapers	13
11	Sofa	12

**Interpretation**

Mean ratings are given in the tables on the first page, to give a succinct single figure for frequency and demand. All questions used a 5-point scale. All questions had a response well above the scale mid-point. This means that there is a substantial demand even for facilities ranked lowest.

Students require of the library facilities to support the following types of study activity:

1. locating resources/information/materials for study purposes;
2. working as an individual on study activities;
3. working in groups on assigned group tasks and to discuss course content.

Activity 1 appears to be catered for, except for the need for better computer facilities discussed below. Study space available has been mostly allocated to individual study, while there is clearly a need for students to study in

groups. Many courses now set group assignments or projects and there is evidence of high quality learning outcomes resulting from group discussion of conceptual material. Collaborative learning will increase greatly when the plans for the foundation year are implemented.

There is currently little space allocated specifically for group study. As a result some of those who need to study in a group make use of the areas which are designated for silent study, disrupting those who want individual study.

The results indicate a clear need for space to be allocated for group work, in which discussion is permitted. Ideally the provision should be in the form of discussion rooms provided with a computer. Roughly half should cater for four students and nearly half for six. Only a small number of larger rooms are needed.

Clearly there cannot be significant provision of custom designed facilities for group study until there is a major expansion of the library. In the mean time up to one third of the areas currently dedicated to silent study should be designated for group work, with discussion permitted. If this conversion takes place it will become viable to enforce the silence rule in the remaining areas.

Both quantitative and qualitative data indicate that the computer has become an essential study tool. Computers need updated software, internet access and printing facilities.

The greatest single demand was for photocopiers, preferably accepting Octopus, which seems to have become the de-facto Hong Kong currency.

While it is not a high priority there was significant demand for an area for relaxation, where mobile phones can be used and refreshments obtained.

### **Conclusion**

- Allocate roughly one third of study space to group discussion.
- Study rooms for 4 or 6 are a high priority when the library is extended.

- Well equipped computers are necessary for study.
- More photocopiers are needed, preferably with Octopus readers.

David Kember      Colin Storey      Shirley Leung      Doris Leung  
Amber Ho